

SAINT CATHERINE OF SIENA

threatening death to the cardinals if their will was not obeyed. It seems agreed by both parties that, about the middle of the night, a crowd composed mainly of rough peasants from the hills broke into the Vatican cellars, " volentes bibere de bono vino papale." At intervals, the cries of^e Roman or Italian " rose up, within and without the palace, and reached the ears of the cardinals in their cells.

Early in the morning of Thursday, April 8, a band of Romans forced their way into the campanile of St. Peter's and rang the bells. They were answered by the tocsin of the Capitol, which clashed out *a stormo*, as though to call the populace to arms. The cardinals had entered the conclave and Corsini was about to address them, when the clamour was renewed, and the Bishop of Marseilles, with his colleagues, implored them not to elect a foreigner or they were all lost. Cenci and Nardo assured them that they could do nothing. Against his will, the Cardinal of Florence was led by Aigrefeuille and Orsini to the window, and the two latter addressed the armed and infuriated crowd below, promising that, if they would keep quiet and leave the cardinals to their deliberations, they should have a Roman or an Italian for Pope.

It is impossible to say with confidence whether this promise, manifestly extorted by fear and necessity, induced the cardinals to do what next they did, or whether their own dissensions had already impelled them to the choice they ultimately made. The Cardinals of Florence and Limoges first suggested that the election should be postponed; but it was feared that this might cause a general massacre of the Sacred College, which could only lead to complete anarchy in the Church. " I should be willing to lay down my life for the Faith," said Cardinal Lagier, " if God were to grant me such grace ; but not for the nationality of a Pope." Then Orsini, who was bent at all costs upon keeping out the Archbishop of Bari, proposed that a friar minor should be dressed up in the papal robes and paraded as Pope, so that they could escape and hold a free election elsewhere. This plan was indignantly rejected by the Cardinal of Limoges and others,